

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 05586 060807Z

17

ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6082

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 5586

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SW, CSCE, FR, IT, UR, PO, SP

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER PALME

1. CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER PALME NOVEMBER 4
TOUCHED UPON A NUMBER OF TOPICS OTHER THAN HIS FORTHCOMING
TRIP TO NEW YORK (SEPTTEL), INCLUDING DETENTE,
PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNISTS IN COALITION GOVERNMENTS,
AND THE SITUATION IN SPAIN.

2. REFERRING TO THE RECENT VISIT OF FRENCH PRESIDENT
GISCARD D'ESTAING TO USSR, I NOTED THAT GISCARD HAD
WANTED TO OBTAIN SOVIET ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE NEED TO
REDUCE IDEOLOGICAL CONTEST BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. I ASKED
PALME HOW GISCARD'S POSITION COMPARED WITH HIS OWN SPEECH
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PAGE 02 STOCKH 05586 060807Z

AT HELSINKI SUMMIT IN WHICH HE SAID THAT CSCE SHOULD

OFFER "INCREASED POSSIBILITIES FOR AN OPEN AND FREER DEBATE ON FUNDAMENTAL POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS" BETWEEN THE EAST AND WEST. PALME REPLIED THAT HIS POSITION INDEED DIFFERED CONSIDERABLY FROM THAT OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENT, WHO WAS PERHAPS STRONGLY MOTIVATED BY CONSIDERATION OF FRANCE'S POWERFUL COMMUNIST PARTY. HE, PALME, DID NOT HAVE TO COPE IN SWEDEN WITH A LARGE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT. IN PALME'S VIEW, THE END OF THE COLD WAR, SYMBOLIZED BY THE CSCE FINAL ACT, MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO CARRY ON VIGOROUSLY THE DEBATE BETWEEN THE CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES.

3. I ASKED PALME IF, IN PRINCIPLE, HE OPPOSED COALITION GOVERNMENTS WHICH INCLUDE COMMUNISTS. HE REPLIED "YES AND NO, DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY CONCERNED." IF THERE IS A LARGE COMMUNIST VOTE AMONG THE WORKING CLASS, HE CONTINUED, IT IS BETTER TO INCLUDE THE COMMUNISTS RATHER THAN LEAVE THEM OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION ON THE ITALIAN SITUATION, HE ANSWERED THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT ITALY TO SPEAK WITH CERTAINTY, BUT ADDED HE HAD THE "IMPRESSION" THAT THE "HISTORICAL COMPROMISE" (I.E., ENTRANCE OF COMMUNISTS INTO ITALIAN GOVERNMENT) IS COMING "BECAUSE THE ITALIAN INDUSTRIALISTS WANT IT." HE DID NOT ELABORATE ON THIS POINT (WHICH WAS NEWS TO ME).

4. CONCERNING SPAIN, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE HAD NOT YET REACHED ANY CONCLUSION ABOUT THE SPANISH POLITICAL SCENE IN A POST-FRANCO PERIOD. THE SITUATION IS IN FLUX, WITH FRANCO STILL LINGERING ON. HOWEVER, HE CONTINUED, IF THE COMMUNISTS IN SPAIN, DO HAVE CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH AMONG THE WORKERS, THEN THE COMMUNISTS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE GOVERNMENT. THE LEADER OF THE SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTY, CARRILLO, SEEMS TO BE A RELATIVE MODERATE, PALME SAID.

5. WE THEN DISCUSSED BRIEFLY SPANISH RELATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD. REFERRING TO PALME'S IMPLIED CRITICISM OF U.S. BASES IN SPAIN LAST SEPTEMBER (STOCKHOLM 4930), I MADE THE POINT THAT OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STOCKH 05586 060807Z

SPANISH ARE IN ESSENCE SUPPORTIVE OF NATO, SINCE THE ROTA BASE IS A STRATEGIC NECESSITY, THE PRESERVATION OF WHICH IS IN THE INTEREST OF ALL WESTERN EUROPE. PALME SAID HE AGREED, BUT ADDED THAT ONE MUST UNDERSTAND THE STRONG FEELINGS OF THE WEST EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES ABOUT SPAIN, DATING FROM THE TIME OF THE CIVIL WAR AND THE COLLABORATION OF FRANCO WITH HITLER AND MUSSOLINI. THE EVENTS OF THAT TIME MADE A DEEP AND LASTING IMPRESSION

UPON WEST EUROPEAN OPINION AND INFLUENCE THE ATTITUDES
OF TODAY'S EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC LEADERS, PALME
CONCLUDED.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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